parents train them, children begin blowing their own noses in this way. 854

5.10. During the first few weeks of life the baby's cranium is elongated by manipulation. Mothers used to be proud of this shape, but the practice is now a rare one. Beginning on the eighth day after birth, the manipulation is done every morning and night, and the limbs are also massaged. A woman warms her hands in front of the fire, covers them with clarified butter, and then presses them lightly on the infant's chest. Next the arms, thighs, legs, feet, knees and elbows are pressed strongly. The nose is pressed together from both sides, so that it becomes higher and less wide. Finally the cranium is squeezed between both hands (Jagor 1876: 196). Not knowing about this custom, a few anthropologists have commented on the anomalous dolichocephaly of the Badagas, so much in contrast with the mesaticephalic and brachycephalic crania of their ancestral homeland in Mysore (Thurston 1909: 67). 856

5.11. Badagas say that until the ninth day of life a baby cannot see or understand anything, although it has vision. This state may last even till the fortieth day, but usually it is after the ninth day that a baby is credited with hearing, sight and understanding. Between the fortieth and sixtieth days its understanding develops, and it recognizes its parents.

From its fortieth day the women begin to make the child laugh. It is felt they must make it laugh between then and its sixtieth day, and also make it cry by taking something away from it, otherwise the child will be considered dumb. If it will neither laugh nor cry, old people will peer into its mouth and if they can see a defect of the uvula then they know the child is dumb. There is no medicine to rectify this. If the child talks the uvula will grow; if he is silent, it will not. Till the fifth or sixth month no one should make a loud noise near the child, lest it become deaf. A child may be born dumb but it cannot be born deaf. 856 826 828

5.12. After the third month of a baby's life the mother will resume her normal fieldwork duties it she is poor; but if well-to-do she will wait until after its sixth month. The insecurity that an infant might feel as a result of now losing its mother's attention for many hours of each day is minimized by the care lavished on it by other female relatives, including its older sisters. Most commonly for the next few years the child's grandmother looks after it all day. (I 854 [603]

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854 repeatedly saw K. Sithamma at the age of 75 suckling a small
[603] grandchild to quieten it.)

5.13. The arrival of a new baby necessarily brings changes in the
854 sleeping habits of a couple. When it is dusk the door of the house
513 must be closed tight, for fear that a "bad wind" or evil spirit might
342 enter and make the baby sick. This is compulsory until the fifth or
[753] sixth month of life: the door may not be opened again, even momentarily, until just before sunrise. If the father has not yet come home at dusk, then either the baby will go to a neighbouring house for the night or the father will have to sleep in one of them when he returns. In later infancy the door should be closed for the night at about 10 o'clock, and this practice will continue until the child is weaned.

When sleeping with her baby a woman's body is entirely nude,
854 for if she wore clothes they would prevent heat from reaching the
513 child from her body. Until a baby is six or seven months old the
855 mother is advised to sleep with her back to it, and never to sleep
[853] while suckling: these precautions result from the fear the child may be suffocated by a breast. Thus if the mother wants to roll over on the bed she must first move the baby over. Usually the youngest one or two children sleep between their parents for warmth, with the unweaned infant always next to the mother. Alternatively mother and baby may use one bed, the father and older children occupying another bed. Sleeping with one's children is not altogether a comfortable situation: "The man who is sleeping with children and the man who is eating raw animal flesh are alike"—both experience difficulties. Other older children in the family may sleep together, but after reaching seven or eight girls sleep separately from their brothers, or else with their mother.

5.14. If a mother has intercourse right after giving birth this weakens
833 the womb for the next delivery, Badagas believe, and so they gene-
834 rally do not do it until five or six months afterwards. One man told me he had enjoyed his wife about three weeks after two of his children were born, and the children died after 52 and 54 days, presumably because of the weakening of their mother's milk. Because of such dangers men used to ask a new father in earlier days, "Are you wearing your loincloth at night?" The cloth was considered sufficient restraint on his passion.

Early Childhood

5.15. At about the fifth month of life the child, surrounded by blankets or other protective matter, is made to sit up. In the sixth or seventh month he will start to crawl, and once he does this he will be allowed to sleep on the floor, but not on a cot or shelf from which he might fall. The relatives encourage a child to crawl, then to stand and walk, by placing little articles as bribes in front of it. A Badaga proverb says, "See the power of the baby's legs when it crawls; see the state of the young plant." This means that the child's future life is reflected in the way it crawls; and similarly, "Judge the little children by watching the good movement of their legs while dancing." If instead of crawling a baby stretches its legs forward while sitting, and then inches its bottom forward, it is said to be a lazy child. Conversely the one who crawls on hands and knees will be walking very soon.

5.16. Children begin talking at 12 to 18 months. The parents at first use a few onomatopoeic words with them, as well as special words for children like the "baby talk" of English. Thus there are words for commonplace matters like sleep, bathe, etc., and a meal (*hittu*) for example is called *ku* for babies; *ku* is in fact ceremonial food mixed with milk.

5.17. It is the prime duty of old people in the home to educate and care for their grandchildren and great-grandchildren, particularly because the parents are often working outside somewhere. If younger people spend too much of their working hours playing with the baby someone will make the snide remark that "The thief of work has the child as a pretext." Even though children now attend school it is still the elders who teach them to talk, and then explain to them much about Badaga life. To do this they tell the children both traditional tales and stories they make up for moral instruction. In this context children often hear the Badaga proverbs, which encapsulate so much of the customary morality. Many of the folktales the children are told and then made to repeat are animal stories with some clear ethical content. Now that children go to school it is most usually after supper when they urge the elders to tell them stories. Children over five are not interested in the animal fables, and so they are told somewhat more realistic stories about Kurumba sorcerers, or about tigers and jackals that take children away at night. Such stories are told to make the children afraid of these

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887 things. Love stories are not told to children under 13. The adults
603 themselves are not really interested in stories, only in folksongs.
855 Adults also sing to their children, and encourage them to learn
867 special children's songs from an early age; but they do also pick up
868 adult folksongs simply by listening to them.

5.18. Child upbringing does not appear to be particularly repressive. The relative freedom that smaller children enjoy is summed up in a proverb: "Children [left out on] the right-of-way will grow; children [kept in] the room get rotten." Children are disciplined by a variety of threats. They are told they will be given away, if bad, to a Golla mendicant or a Kurumba tribesman. The coming of a ghost, demon, or a vaccinator is another common threat; or they may be told a tiger or a pig will take them away. Otherwise people compare a bad child unfavourably with the behaviour of his childhood friend. These threats and comparisons have little effect on older children. From the age of five or six children are jokingly told about a certain cross-cousin who will come to marry them "next year." This threat or promise is also used to enjoin proper behaviour: "If your wife saw you, she'd abuse you" (or conversely, "she'd marry you at once"). When there seems to be a choice among several cousins the parents may ask a child which he prefers, or threaten to bring a bad one to him if he misbehaves. The same treatment is used to discipline girls, with the additional possibility of telling a small girl she will be given away in marriage to a beggar, a Kota or a Kurumba, instead of to a Badaga husband. Adolescent children may not be disciplined so gently, and some of them are not unfamiliar with a rope's end.

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Kindness and outright bribery are also lavished on children, as evidenced in the saying: "It is like influencing children by giving them crude sugar."

857 5.19. Between the ages of five and seven children go through a transition marked by some major changes in their daily habits. In the old days some girls would become child-brides after reaching the age of five. Nowadays the transition means spending much of the week in school instead of at home. There are other changes too. The children begin to eat from their own plates. Girls stop
857 sleeping with their fathers, though they may continue to sleep
867 with their mothers or with other children. Boys are now embarrassed to sleep with their mothers or sisters. If there are several boys
857 or several girls of similar age on one street they now band together